

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims below will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. The changes to currently amended claims are shown using strikethrough to identify deleted material and underlining to identify added material.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A sample analyzer for analyzing a sample, comprising:
a pipette configured for suctioning the sample;
a sample preparation unit configured for preparing a measured sample by diluting the sample supplied by the pipette with an acidic solution;
a pipette washing unit configured for washing the pipette with the acidic solution;
a detection unit configured for obtaining a detection signal from the measured sample prepared by the sample preparation unit; and
a controller configured for calculating an analysis result from the detection signal obtained by the detection unit.
2. (currently amended) The sample analyzer of Claim 1, wherein the pipette washing unit is configured for washing the pipette with the acidic solution and a washing solution having a pH which is higher than a pH of the acidic solution, such that the pipette ~~may be~~ is washed with the washing solution when the analysis result is less than a predetermined value, and the pipette ~~may be~~ is washed with the acidic solution when the analysis result is equal to or greater than the predetermined value.
3. (original) The sample analyzer of Claim 2, wherein the pipette washing unit washes the pipette with the acidic solution after having washed the pipette with the washing solution when the analysis result is equal to or greater than the predetermined value.
4. (original) The sample analyzer of claim 1, wherein the pipette washing unit washes the pipette by suctioning and discharging the acidic solution into and from the pipette.

5. (original) The sample analyzer of claim 1, wherein the pipette washing unit washes the pipette by holding the acidic solution within the pipette for a predetermined time.
6. (original) The sample analyzer of Claim 1, wherein the pipette washing unit washes an inside of the pipette using the acidic solution, and washes an outside of the pipette using a washing solution having a pH which is higher than a pH of the acidic solution.
7. (original) The sample analyzer of Claim 1, wherein the controller calculates number of bacteria contained in the sample.
8. (original) The sample analyzer of Claim 1, wherein the acidic solution has a pH of less than 5.0.
9. (original) The sample analyzer of claim 1, wherein the acidic solution has a pH of between 2 and 3.
10. (currently amended) A bacteria analyzer for analyzing a bacterium in a sample, comprising:
 - a pipette configured for suctioning the sample;
 - a sample preparation unit configured for preparing a measured sample from the sample supplied by the pipette;
 - a pipette washing unit configured for washing the pipette with an acidic solution;
 - a detection unit configured for obtaining a detection signal from the measured sample prepared by the sample preparation unit; and
 - a controller configured for calculating an analysis result relating to a bacterium in the sample from the detection signal obtained by the detection unit.

11. (original) The bacteria analyzer of Claim 10, wherein the sample preparation unit prepares the measured sample by diluting the sample with a dilution fluid to form a diluted sample, and staining the diluted sample with a stain.

12. (original) The bacteria analyzer of Claim 11, wherein the acidic solution is used as the dilution fluid.

13. (original) The bacteria analyzer of Claim 11, wherein the dilution fluid destroys a membrane of the bacterium for effective staining of the bacterium.

14. (original) The bacteria analyzer of Claim 10, wherein the sample is urine.

15-24. (canceled)

25. (new) A urine analyzer for analyzing a urine sample, comprising:
a pipette configured for suctioning the urine sample;
a sample preparation unit configured for preparing a measured sample by diluting the urine sample supplied by the pipette with an acidic dilution solution;
a pipette washing unit configured for washing the pipette with an acidic solution;
a detection unit configured for obtaining a detection signal from the measured sample prepared by the sample preparation unit; and
a controller configured for calculating an analysis result from the detection signal obtained by the detection unit.

SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENTS

Claims 15-24 are canceled without prejudice to their continued prosecution in a continuation and/or divisional application.

The amendments to the specification were made solely to correct typographical errors.

The amendments to claims 1, 2, and 10 were made solely for clarification.

New claim 25 is fully supported by original claim 1 and by the description in the specification (e.g., page 4, lines 4-14; page 6, lines 32-34; page 38, lines 5-7; etc.).

No new matter has been added. Upon entry of this Response, claims 1-14 and 25 are present and active in the application.